



May 23, 2014

This week's edition includes important information I want to share with you:

- **Stakeholder Community Forum Meetings:** DIDD and TennCare will be hosting a second round of community forums in each region of the state to gather input and talk about proposed changes to the state's Arlington and Statewide Waivers. These forums are targeted to persons receiving services, their families and providers of Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waiver programs. Earlier this year, meetings were held to solicit ideas of improving programs and services within these waivers. All of the input received was used to develop a Concept Paper. We will provide an overview of the paper and would like to hear your thoughts and concerns. Due to limited space, we ask that you pre-register if planning to attend. Registration and complete meeting details are attached. Please share this information with those who may not have computer access. We look forward to seeing everyone there!

<b>West</b> June 4, 2014	<b>Middle</b> June 6, 2014	<b>East</b> June 11, 2014
9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. <b>(Providers)</b>	9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. <b>(Providers)</b>	9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. <b>(Providers)</b>
1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. <b>(Persons Receiving Services/Families)</b>	1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. <b>(Persons Receiving Services/Families)</b>	1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. <b>(Persons Receiving Services/Families)</b>
Star Center Auditorium 1119 Old Humboldt Road Jackson, TN 38305	River of Life Church 224 Stewart's Ferry Pike Nashville, TN 37214	Rothchild Catering & Conference Center 8807 Kingston Pike Knoxville, TN 37923

- **TN Employment Idol:** Congratulations to Joel Brenner, whose video entry won the 2014 TN Employment Idol contest. Sponsored by TennesseeWorks, winners are honored annually at the Tennessee Disability MegaConference. Joel currently receives supports through Progress and is a 19-year employee of the Airport Marriott Nashville. He works full-time as a dishwasher and helps with prep work for hotel banquets. Throughout his career, Joel has been Employee of the Month three times and was nominated for a Marriott national award. According to Joel, the secret of his success is "working hard." You can view his story [here](#).
- **Greeneville Focus Group:** The next meeting is May 27 from 12:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m. in the Greene County Skills conference room. The third phase of the employment initiative, "I Wanna Work," will focus on finishing an Employment Profile in preparation for a future meet and greet with various business representatives. Friends, support staff, advocates, ISCs and others are welcome. Please RSVP by May 25 to [Chaneth.Quemore@tn.gov](mailto:Chaneth.Quemore@tn.gov) or [jwinters@thearctn.org](mailto:jwinters@thearctn.org).

- **Spotlighting Persons Supported:** Work experience doesn't always come by applying for a job. Sometimes, skills are showcased through volunteer work. Nicole Emerson is supported by Prospect, Inc. and volunteers her time at The Hope Lodge, a local non-profit agency in Nashville.

It doesn't take long for someone to see Nicole has an incredibly friendly and outgoing personality. Her day staff knew that if given an opportunity to use those traits, she could bring value to a business. Developing experiences, whether volunteer or paid, takes teamwork from many people. By listening to Nicole and figuring out what her most valuable strengths are, Prospect's employment team was able to market these skills to The Hope Lodge.

Jo, manager, oversees daily operations of the 40-room complex that offers housing to people who are undergoing cancer treatment. Prospect promoted Nicole's attributes and Jo quickly saw the advantage to The Hope Lodge and its residents. He believes that healing and recovery is easier when a person has the opportunity to socialize with others, taking the focus off treatment. Nicole is able to offer her incredible personality to so many. Not only does she mingle with the residents, she also helps with some administrative tasks. This has proven to be a win-win for the community and Nicole.



- **Employment First Community of Practice Webinar:** Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) Subject Matter Expert Doug Crandell will conduct a presentation titled, *Promoting Evidence-Based Practice in Supported Employment (SE), Leveraging Social Capital and Expanding the Use of Customized Employment (CE) Strategies* on June 2 from 1:00 p.m.-2:30 p.m. CST. This session will provide participants with some tools to assist with job placements through the use of CE and to specifically leverage social capital through SE.

Participation is limited to 25 individuals and on a first-come, first-serve basis. If interested, please RSVP to Betty Chester at [Betty.Chester@tn.gov](mailto:Betty.Chester@tn.gov) by May 28. Please note the webinar will be conducted via Adobe Connect and participants will need to call 615-741-1193 or toll free at 1-877-214-0097.

To join the meeting, participants should enter this link in their web browser: <http://stateoftennessee.adobeconnect.com/empdaysvcs/>. Select the option to enter as guest, type in your first and last name and click on the option to enter the meeting room. If you have never connected to an Adobe Connect meeting before on your computer, please test your connection prior to the meeting [here](#). You may be prompted to install an Adobe Connect Add-In, which may take a few minutes to download and install. You may also need to temporarily disable your pop-up blocker. Please contact [DIDDHelpdesk@tn.gov](mailto:DIDDHelpdesk@tn.gov) if you need any assistance.

- **Measles Cases in Tennessee:** Please read the attached media release from the Tennessee Department of Health (TDH) on measles cases currently being investigated in the state.



- **Honoring Nurses:** National Nurses Week is celebrated annually from May 6-12. To recognize nurses for their contributions to the field of intellectual and developmental disabilities, a luncheon was held in their honor on May 12, 2014 at the West Tennessee Regional Office (WTRO). The caring and dedication of DIDD nurses helps Tennesseans with intellectual and developmental disabilities live healthier, fulfilling and rewarding lives. We appreciate all you do!

- **Achievement Awards Day:** The Greene Valley Parent Guardian Association (PGA) and the East Tennessee Community Homes (ETCH) held its 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Achievement Awards Day last Sunday afternoon. It was a lovely afternoon and many attendees enjoyed the stroll across Greene Valley's grounds to the gymnasium. Representatives of the Advisory Council lead the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance. Entertainment was provided by Greeneville High School's award-winning choir which opened its performance with a lively rendition of *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot* and ended with *America The Beautiful*. The audience enjoyed the unique talents of this group. Twelve people living at GVDC and two living in the ETCH, were recognized for their personal achievements during the past year by receiving either a 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> place medallion and a cash award. It was a proud moment for each person and the PGA along with GVDC and the ETCH, congratulates each winner!



**Be safe and have a great holiday weekend!**

~Debbie